

**SUMMARY OF THE
MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 2002**

The Membership and Outreach Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met on Wednesday, November 20, 2002, at 1:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time (MST) as part of the Eighth NELAC Interim Meeting (NELAC 8i). Chairperson Ms. Sherry Clay of the Texas Department of Health led the meeting. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to discuss agenda items and open the floor to any new business.*

AGENDA ITEMS

Overview of NELAC 101

Ms. Clay asked Mr. Jerry Parr to give an overview of the NELAC 101 meeting which was held on Monday, November 18, 2002. The purpose of that meeting was to help those new to or unfamiliar with NELAC understand the committees and logistics of how to participate. Mr. Parr asked those in the audience that were in attendance at NELAC 101 to speak about any aspect of the meeting which they found particularly helpful or wasteful of time. Several attendees had been at the NELAC 101 meeting and gave comments such as “very helpful” concerning the coverage of the NELAC Standards and aspects of behavior and etiquette and that “everyone should take it.” Mr. Parr also commented that all the slides used in the presentation at NELAC 101 would be available as handouts on the Institute for National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation (INELA) website very soon. It was suggested by several attendees that a “NELAC facts” sheet be made available for use in future NELAC 101 meetings. Such a fact sheet would include information on how to interface with NELAC Committees and how to use and understand the NELAC Standards.

Mr. Parr then covered the elements of the NELAC 101 meeting, which are listed below.

- NELAC background history for each past meeting and the contents of each chapter of the NELAC Standards, pertaining to laboratories, which was presented by Mr. Chuck Wilby.
- NELAC restructuring into the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) and formation of INELA, presented by Ms. Carol Batterton.
- A description of what to expect at NELAC 8i by Mr. Parr.

Mr. Parr noted that the room which had been used for the NELAC 101 meeting had been full, but that no attendance forms or evaluation forms had been completed for the meeting, and that in future meetings those should be done. One attendee asked how he could interact with the committees, since he was not a regular at every meeting. Mr. Parr and Ms. Clay agreed that the NELAC ground rules were guidelines for such but that they are building blocks for a better solution that may be used in the future to create handouts for future NELAC 101 meetings.

Ms. Clay suggested that more frequent mixers, lunches and receptions at NELAC meetings would offer more opportunities for networking to all attendees.

NELAC Website Innovations

Mr. Mike Ciolek was asked to speak about any new modifications to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) NELAC website, as webmaster. Mr. Ciolek had no major modifications to report although he did report adding several related links to the website. Mr. Ciolek requested suggestions from those in attendance, on improvements for the NELAC website, stating that they could respond by using the website and clicking the "contact us" button to email suggestions or criticisms.

Strategies for New Member Outreach/ Distribution of NELAC Materials

Mr. Parr was the first to offer comments on this subject, suggesting that soon NELAC would be more of a government affiliated membership only and that more of his time would be spent advertising INELA membership. He gave an overview of things he had been doing to that end. Mr. Parr stated that he had already given seminars on NELAC and INELA to groups in over 25 states in the United States. Representatives from Michigan and Utah had contacted him most recently to give similar presentations in their states. He will also proceed with mass mailings to all NELAC accredited laboratories and accrediting authorities for INELA marketing.

Mr. Parr went on to propose further NELAC membership outreach suggestions, including ideas for training a team of long-term NELAC members which already know the program very well. These members would commit to giving a seminar or short presentation once during the each of the next several years to market the program. The Ninth NELAC Annual Meeting (NELAC 9) is proposed to be the first opportunity to train NELAC members to carry the message of the advantages of NELAC membership and accrediting authority to others in an aggressive marketing campaign. A suggestion was made that a package of marketing materials be prepared and provided to all those that would volunteer to market for NELAC membership.

The conversation moved to why it seemed that many states were resistant to acceptance and participation in NELAC. Suggestions were that the NELAC Standards were intimidating to many laboratories, large municipal operations, and small commercial laboratories, as well as states with many small laboratories. Several attendees suggested that success stories from laboratories and/or states that had previously resisted membership or recognition of NELAC be cited to show the benefits of participation. Ms. Clay and several attendees suggested that mailing databases from several professional organizations should be requested/accessed for marketing purposes. Several organizations were mentioned including those with wastewater, drinking water, and waste management interests for use in future advertising campaigns for NELAC membership and/or recognition. Mr. Ciolek requested that those in attendance email him with names and contact information for those suggested professional organizations. An exhibition booth was also suggested as a marketing tool for use at trade shows and professional meetings for related fields. Another suggestion from the floor was to create a PowerPoint presentation on the benefits of NELAC recognition/membership, as well as authoring articles for publication in

professional organization newsletters in related fields such as drinking water, wastewater, and solid waste management.

ADJOURNMENT

The committee was very pleased with all the suggestions from the audience and with no new business presented, Ms. Clay adjourned the meeting.

**ACTION ITEMS
MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
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Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	Repeat NELAC 101 at the next Annual meeting	NELAC 9
2.	Create a “NELAC facts” sheet for new members as part of NELAC 101	NELAC 9
3.	Suggest and facilitate increased number of informal networking events at future NELAC meetings	Ongoing
4.	Create “training class in-a-box” resources for NELAC members which would market aggressively for NELAC membership	NELAC 9
5.	Create a PowerPoint presentation for marketing purposes on the advantages of NELAC membership/recognition.	NELAC 9
6.	Author articles for publication in newsletter of professional organizations for marketing of NELAC membership.	Ongoing

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MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 2002**

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